

Lottie Moon goal: \$81 million

Price of revealing gospel to unreached is high

By Marty Croll

RICHMOND, Va. — The price of revealing Jesus Christ to unreached masses of people trapped behind political and cultural barriers amounts to much more than Southern Baptists have been willing to pay — so far.

"We keep talking about Bold Mission Thrust and increasing the numbers of missionaries and volunteers," said Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Keith Parks in a recent interview. "We've always acted like we can do it."

"But one of the elements we as Southern Baptists have never really grappled with seriously is the need for increased budget."

Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union has set the goal for this

year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering at \$81 million. The offering, received in local Southern Baptist churches throughout the nation, represents the denomination's largest single source of income in its foreign mission effort. The other major financial contribution to the denomination's foreign mission work comes through the Cooperative Program unified budget.

Since 1976, when Southern Baptists developed a plan to help reach all the world with the story of Jesus Christ, the Foreign Mission Board has continued to lose buying power overseas.

"We have fewer dollars in real dollar value today to use per missionary than we had in 1976," Parks said. "That doesn't sound like bold missions to me."

Every penny of the Christmas offering goes overseas to support foreign missionaries and their work. None of the offering is used for administrative costs, which are funded by the Cooperative Program and other gifts.

To reach the world, mission strategists have begun to use techniques costing more money.

Traditionally, the local Baptists in countries where Southern Baptists have missionaries have contributed toward missions efforts.

In places where "there are no Baptist constituencies out there to help," Parks said, "the total burden becomes ours."

For example, the board's new non-residential missionaries live geographically distant from the

restricted country or unreached people group they are assigned to evangelize. They research their target groups and work to identify ways Christians can reach people behind boundaries other missionaries cannot cross. Until self-supporting groups of believers are formed in those restricted areas, non-residential missionaries are virtually on their own.

Meanwhile, the cost of supporting these missionaries and others continues to escalate. Missionary medical expenses have become "almost unbearable," Parks said. The cost of buying or using property overseas continues to rise. Travel prices, too, are increasing.

And the cost of schooling children of missionaries has grown to be such

a weight on mission resources that the mission board is looking for alternatives. Schooling for children in international schools can be higher than university education in the U.S.

"Housing, automobiles, everything — everything's going up," Parks said.

Yet Parks and other mission leaders "continue to be overwhelmed by the fact that about 25 percent of the world has never had the opportunity to hear the gospel," he said.

Parks believes Southern Baptists have been blessed by resources so God can use them to reach spiritually deprived people. "The gospel always comes to us on the way to someone else," he said. "We have a divine obligation to take it to someone else."



Sent . . . to Serve
Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions
Dec. 3-10, 1989
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$81 million

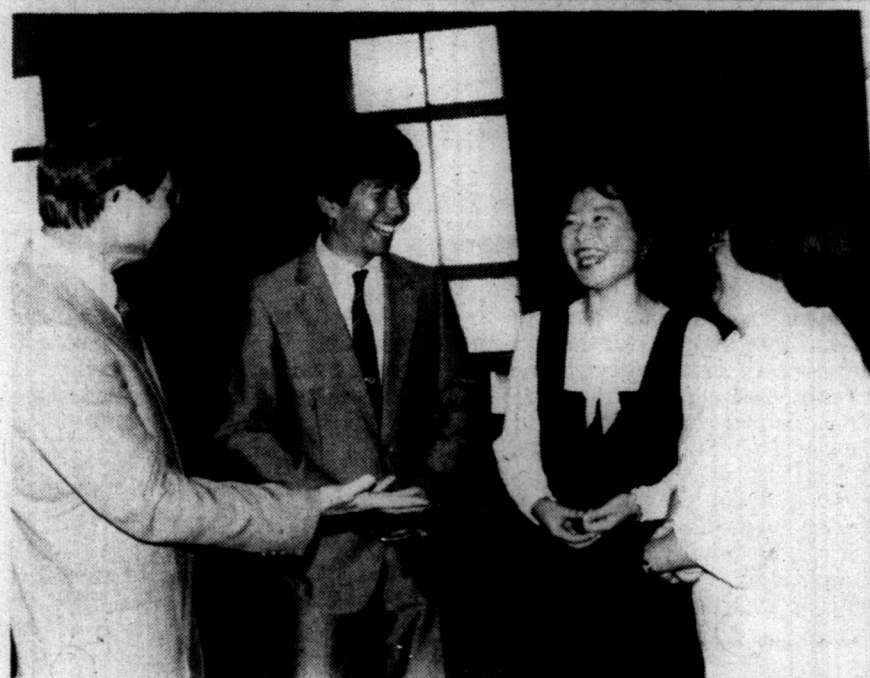
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At Chofu Church in Tokyo

Mississippi missionaries Hank Lee and Mrs. Lee, left and right, visit with Sakamaki and Kazume Hiroaki at Chofu Church in Tokyo. The Hiroakis will soon move to Los Angeles, where he will become pastor of a Japanese Church.

Southern Baptists support more "Bibles for Russia"

By Tim Yarbrough

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — While its people still guard their optimism, religious reforms taking place in the Soviet Union are providing unprecedented opportunities for the gospel of Jesus Christ to be preached to all people, observers there report.

And Southern Baptists are seeing their efforts to provide Bibles for Soviet people realized through continued participation in the "Bibles for Russia" campaign, said James Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, who recently returned from a week-long trip to the country.

Smith accompanied a group of Baptist World Alliance executive staff members who were invited to the Soviet Union by the country's All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists. Smith was invited because of the Brotherhood Commission's participation in Bibles for Russia. In addition to Smith, the group included Denton Lotz, BWA executive director and W.J. (Doc) Isbell, executive director of the BWA men's department.

While in the Soviet Union, Smith visited the Soviet Latvian capital of Riga, where 20,000 Latvian-language Bibles have been delivered for distribution. Another 80,000 Bibles printed in four other languages have or soon will be delivered for distribution in Armenia, Georgia, Estonia and the Ukraine, Smith said. Other cities Smith visited while in the country included Moscow, Minsk, and Leningrad.

The response of Soviets who have received Bibles has been that of joy and appreciation, Smith said.

The current Bibles for Russia campaign follows a successful campaign in 1987 by the United Bible Societies and Baptist World Alliance, when

100,000 Russian-language Bibles were sent to the country prior to the celebration of the 1,000-year anniversary of Christianity in the Soviet Union. Bibles for Russia was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention Baptist Men organization as an international project.

Religious reforms brought about by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev are providing unprecedented opportunities for the church in the Soviet Union, Smith said.

The current attitude among Soviet officials seems to be that of casting aside much of the Stalin ideology and replacing it with Leninism. Smith said, noting the secretary of religious affairs in Minsk said that Stalin is blamed for closing up Soviet churches and decreeing that only one church of any given denomination could exist in a city.

Now that barriers are being lifted, 20 adult members of a church are allowed to make an application for a building permit for the construction of a new church, Smith said.

Smith and others visited the site of a project underway by the Baptist church in Leningrad to open a new building. A number of young people are living and working in the building.

"Those young people are living in that building and are refurbishing it themselves without any modern equipment," said Smith. "They are some of the most excited . . . young people that I have ever seen. They are working on what looks like an impossible task, but one of these days there is going to be another Baptist church there."

As Bibles are being provided to people, many have felt an obligation to return something to the church. Money received by the churches is in

turn being placed into a building fund that will result in the construction of new churches, Smith said. While a donation is not a requirement to receive a Bible, Smith said, most people give 25 rubles, which represents about 40 American dollars and a month's tithe for a Soviet worker.

"For 50 years they have been unable to buy a Bible, and they have been unable to give money for the building of a church building. They have been unable to devote money to missions," he said. "For the older people who don't have the money or for young people who don't have a Bible or for indigent people who can't afford it, they are giving them free without question."

The Soviet Union has about 5,000 Baptist churches, which is the third highest concentration of Baptist churches of any country in the world, Smith said. The United States ranks first, with about 120,000 Baptist churches.

India ranks second, with about 6,000 Baptist churches. Christians shouldn't be surprised at changes taking place in the Soviet Union, Smith said.

"You have two things that are working in favor. One is the promise of Jesus that the gospel will be preached throughout the whole world as a witness to all . . . of the people," Smith said. "The second thing is, let's not underestimate the fact that there are more people praying for the opening of doors for the gospel in the world than have ever (prayed) in the history of Christianity."

So, if we believe the word of God to be true, and if we believe in the power of prayer, we ought to expect that God is going to open these doors."

Tim Yarbrough writes for the Brotherhood Commission.

Wrinkle me, Lord

It was late when I came in, looking proper, neat and trim
As I found my usual place along the pew.
She was sitting by the aisle and had been there quite awhile
I could tell, it was her clothes gave me the clue.

For each time she stood to sing, or to pray and forward lean;
I could count a hundred wrinkles in her dress,
And I wondered as I stared how those creases told she cared
By her serving, wrinkles of this love profess.

For His robe must have wrinkled some, holding children when they'd come;
Sitting on a mountaintop or in a boat;
Crushed by crowds and touched by men, others grasping at the hem;
His serving hands produced a rumpled coat.

We who stay dressed trim and neat are not lodging at the feet
Of Him who helps and would our pattern be;
Pray make mine a servant's heart, dwelling kindness to impart
That I might glorify You, Lord, please wrinkle me.

—Erma Jewel Crowe, Greenville
July 10, 1989

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

What happened to whiskey?

What happened to whiskey?

The taxes from legalizing liquor were supposed to take care of the state's schools.

They didn't.

Will the taxes from a legalized lottery do any better?

Not likely.

So why give it a second thought?

Because it promises something for nothing; and that's attractive, even, to grown up adults. The problem is, it wouldn't work.

There would be a big winner every now and then from among the ticket buyers; but, for the most part, the big winner would be the equipment company. That's the reason that it has been pushed so strenuously. There might be a lot of tickets sold. There might not be. The equipment company would get its money regardless.

Projections are running at about \$50 million per year income from taxes. That means that hundreds of millions of dollars worth of tickets would have to be sold, for the taxes would be paid after the winner gets his take and the equipment company had received its payment and the people who would run the lottery had been paid their salaries and the state had taken out the money it would need to promote the lottery.

The state promote the lottery? Sure. The state would be in the gamb-

ing business.

After all of that, would there be \$50 millions of dollars left for the schools? It doesn't seem likely to expect that such would be the case.

The backers of the lottery, realizing that all that much money is not likely to come in from Mississippi, have said that they would expect to get business from Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Alabama. But this is a forlorn hope. If the deal were to be a success, as they insist that it would be, then those states would set up their own lottery. If it were not a success, as is more likely the case, then we would be preying on the citizens of those states just as we would be preying on our own citizens.

Several years ago the sale and use of liquor were illegal in the state. Those who wanted to legalize liquor came up with the idea that it could be done by tying school financing to it. It was accomplished, so education for the state's children was supposed to be financed in part by something that the people in the state previously had thought to be wrong.

It didn't work.

Now those who want to legalize lottery, which is unconstitutional at the present, thought to be wrong, are attempting to accomplish that legalization by tying it to provide much needed financing for the state's schools. Once again there is thought being

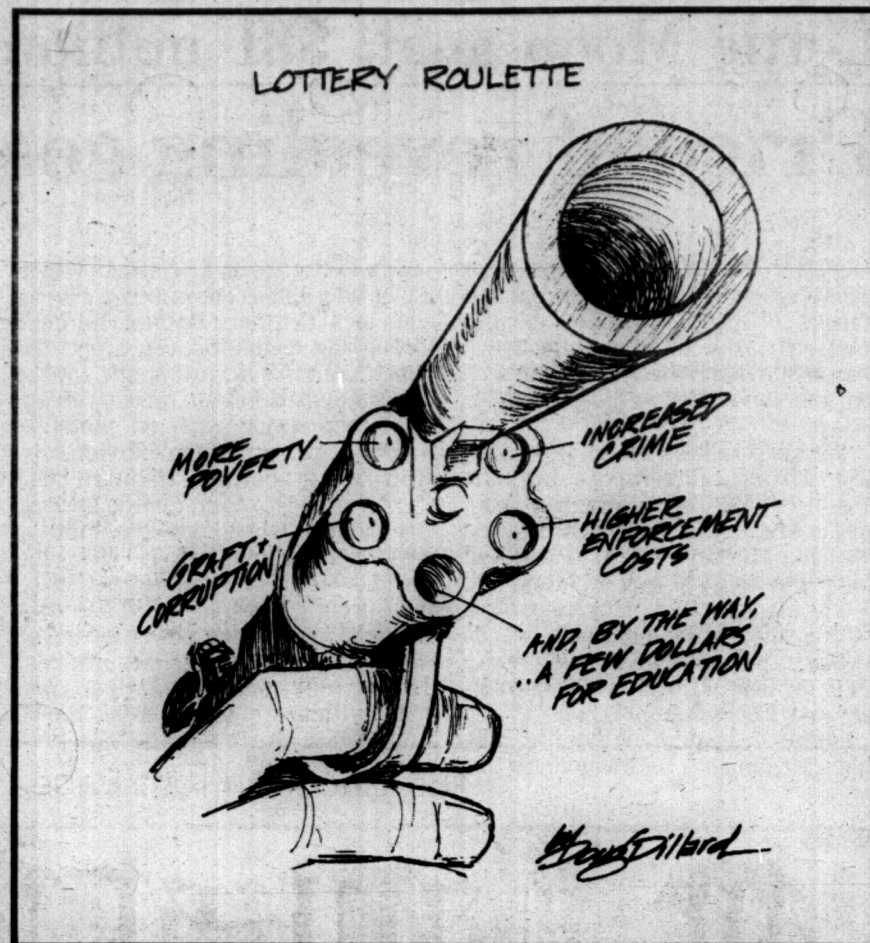
given to using something that has been thought to be wrong to provide an education for the state's children.

But suppose that enough of us in the state were to decide, "There's nothing wrong with lottery. Those who don't want to won't have to participate. Let's give it a try." Then what?

Right off, we have to realize that people gamble on impulse, not on schedule. And there always would be intense efforts being made to convince everyone that gambling is wrong on the face of it. Given those circumstances, could we depend on a steady income from lottery taxes? That doesn't seem likely either.

And we must realize that the people who have plenty of money already, those who should be paying a sizeable share of the school expense, would not be tempted to patronize the lottery because they wouldn't need any extra money. It would be those who need extra money, who would need to use what they would spend on lottery tickets for something else, who would be the biggest patrons. It would be as if the state were robbing from the poor to pay for something the rich should be helping to provide but wouldn't be. That is the concept of Robin Hood in reverse.

We do need money for school systems. That is understandable and goes without saying. The question is, why do we have to give thought to us-



ing something that is considered to be wrong to try to provide the money?

Politicians have a horror of raising taxes. The problem, however, is not in the raising of taxes but in the perception of the people as to what the tercourse, and equal numbers of that a lot of it is wasted.

Direct taxes would be the cheapest and most efficient way of providing the money needed for schools. If the people felt that the tax money were being spent wisely, they would support it.

That is the only way that it is ever going to work effectively.

Guest opinion . . . It can be done

By Herschel H. Hobbs

Southern Baptists have every reason to be thankful for the outcome of the recent Southwestern Seminary trustees' meeting. It is in keeping with the action of the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. Adopting the Peace Committee's report, it recommended that all political action among our brethren cease.

It can be done! It happened in the Peace Committee. And it happened between the trustees and administra-

tion of Southwestern Seminary. When Christian people with honest differences talk and pray together in faith and love, they will be led of the Lord to solve their difficulties.

Unity in diversity has always characterized Southern Baptists. It always should do so. It can be done. It must be done!

Herschel Hobbs is pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City.

observation was during October; and the Kellys, Earl and Marjorie, recently returned from Japan, where they served with the second wave of Mississippi Baptists. That group went to the southern portion of the nation. An earlier group went to the northern section.

The convention begins on Monday evening, Nov. 13 and closes at noon on Wednesday, Nov. 15. The representation needs to be as broad as possible.

And for those pastors who want to come into Jackson earlier and hear preaching other than their own, the Pastors' Conference will be in session, also at First Baptist Church, during Monday morning and afternoon.

Mississippi Baptists can enter a new decade with enthusiasm for the work that is to be done, and the meetings next week in Jackson will go a long way toward establishing that enthusiasm.

May it so be done.

AIDS among teens alarms experts

Alarmed by new data showing that the AIDS virus is rapidly spreading among some groups of teen-agers, experts are calling for an expanded national effort to stem the epidemic.

Not only are teen-agers becoming infected with the virus, but it is being transmitted through heterosexual intercourse, and equal numbers of males and females are infected.

By contrast, among adults the virus has been transmitted primarily through homosexual sex or intravenous drug use, and the number of infected men far exceeds the number of infected women.

— The Cincinnati Enquirer

Enthusiasm for the nineties

Mississippi Baptists' most important event of the year is the Mississippi Baptist Convention. That is because it is the annual gathering of Mississippi Baptists to discuss what has been done during the year just passed and to lay plans for the year ahead.

Historically, the annual gatherings of Mississippi Baptists, the conventions, are not well attended. Attendance usually runs about 1,500, and that is fewer messengers than we have churches. If each church were to send one messenger, we would have almost 2,000 in attendance.

We have no way of determining how many churches send messengers to the convention without a laborious card-by-card count; and, actually, it makes no difference whether we know the total number of churches or not. The main hope is to have as many churches as possible with messengers attending, because it is a very important meeting.

Always one of the most important items to be handled is the adoption of an annual budget. This is important because the budget represents the procedure by which we put the financial wherewithal to our other efforts in working out ways of witnessing to the world. The world includes Mississippi as well as Bangladesh, so some of the money must stay in our state. One of our big decisions is to determine how much we are going to strive to raise and what we are going to do with it. We must decide how much we will keep in Mississippi and how much we will send beyond our

borders. The budget committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board always brings a detailed recommendation; and generally it is accepted without a great deal of deliberation, if any. But whether there is deliberation or not, we need to be there to be a part of the process. The budget is a major item in world-wide witnessing.

The Master told us to make disciples of all nations. Most of us cannot go to the other nations. We are not supposed to. If we all went, there would be nobody to pay the bills of our going. We are supposed to stay behind and support those who go, to hold up their hands, so to speak, so that the enemy will be conquered.

This year we will elect a new president. Jim Futral will have served out his two one-year terms. There is no constitutional stipulation against longer service, but the traditional practice has been to serve two terms. The last president to serve more than two terms was R. B. Gunter in 1940, 1941, and 1942, which was during World War II. Perhaps the war had its effect in that way. Before that there was no service longer than two years after H. F. Sproles served in 1903, 1904, and 1905.

The convention once met all over the state; but, with one exception of Meridian in 1941, it has met only in Jackson since 1938.

And such will be the case this year. The meeting will be at First Baptist Church as usual. Last year we met in the church's temporary auditorium

while the regular meeting place was being enlarged and remodeled. That is all complete now; and First Church, began meeting in its new surroundings on the last Sunday in October. It is ready for the state convention.

President Futral has done an outstanding job this year. He has served Mississippi Baptists with distinction. Surely he deserves the appreciation of all of us. The first vice-president is Jon Dolar, pastor of First Church, Leland.

For much of this year he has been concerned with the very serious illness of his wife, but he has served the convention very well indeed. The second vice-president is bi-vocational pastor Ronnie Robinson, who is the executive director-elect of the Mississippi Baptist Children's Village.

Two important personalities will be a part of the Mississippi Baptist Convention this year for different but related reasons. This will be the first convention for Bill Causey as executive director-treasurer. He assumed that office on Aug. 15 of this year.

Then there will be a portion of the program that will honor the executive director-treasurer who retired on that date, Earl Kelly. Kelly held the office for 16 years.

At last year's convention we noted the arrangement of a partnership with Japan Baptists to aid in their observance of 100 years of Baptist work in the nation. Kelly was instrumental in setting up and developing the partnership procedures. That

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1989 convention sessions will begin Monday night

Sessions of the 1989 Mississippi Baptist Convention begin at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 13. When the program concludes on Nov. 15 at noon, messengers to the convention will have elected a new president, passed a convention budget which funds missions and Christian education in Mississippi and around the world, and heard a number of sermons.

Convention President Jim Futral, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson, will preside his last time, having completed two successive one-year terms as president. A new president will be elected at 9:40 Tuesday morning.

The 1990 budget being considered is \$19,581,130, 36.53 percent of which will go out of state to Southern Baptist causes. A challenge budget totals a

half million dollars.

Featured speakers for the convention include a South African minister, the new executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and a black preacher from Watts in Los Angeles.

Don Wilton, a professor at New Orleans Seminary from South Africa, will deliver a series of devotional thoughts called "Bible Treasures" during each session of the convention.

Bill Causey, new executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will preach on Tuesday evening. And E. V. Hill, pastor of the Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in the Watts area of Los Angeles, will deliver the closing message Wednesday morning.

Other featured speakers will be Bill



Causey



Futral



Wilton



O'Brien



Vinson



Hill

O'Brien, special assistant to the president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, who will speak on Monday evening, Jim Futral, who will deliver the presidential address on Tuesday morning, and Tommy Vin-

son, pastor of Crossgates Church, Brandon, who will preach the convention sermon on Tuesday afternoon.

Special music will be brought during the convention by the Mississippi Singing Churchmen, Bill O'Brien of

the FMB, Charlotte (Mrs. Bill) Causey; and the choirs of Broadmoor Church, Jackson; Crossgates Church, Brandon; Parkway Church, Jackson; and First Church, McComb.

The Second Front Page

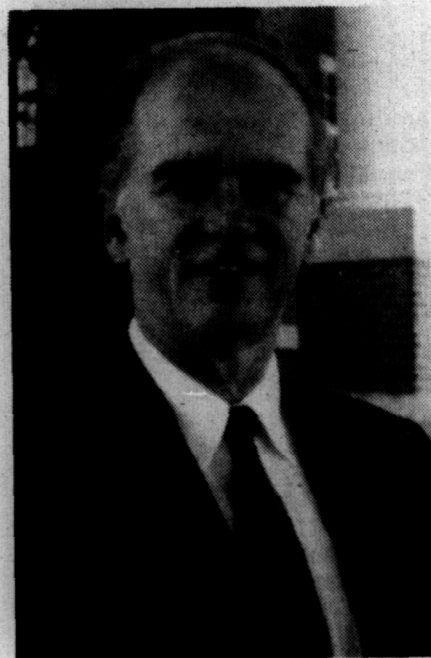
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William Carey elects Jim Edwards president



Edwards

The William Carey College board of trustees on Nov. 2 elected James W. Edwards, 51, as president of the college. He had served as interim president since June when J. Ralph Noonkester retired after 33 years as president.

Before coming to Carey, Edwards was president of Edwards and Associates in Nashville, a firm specializing in educational and financial consulting. He has served as academic vice president of Union University and of Dallas Baptist University and was financial and chief operating officer of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. He served two terms as mayor of Plano, Tex.

Edwards is a certified public accountant and earned a Ph.D. in business and economics from Michigan State University. He is a graduate of Western Kentucky University and earned a master of business administration degree from Indiana University.

Edwards was hired in June as in-

terim president following a month as temporary financial administrator for Carey. He had been called in as a consultant by the Mississippi Baptist Education Commission to aid in an investigation of Carey's finances and administration.

Said Trustee Chairman Joe Dale, (Continued on page 4)

South group reports on land of miniatures

By Don McGregor

Japan is a land of miniatures, and yet everything is done right. A Bonsei garden in Omiya, a suburb of Tokyo, has a tree that is 350 years old, but it is no more than four feet tall. Miniature cabbage patches dot the outlying areas of Tokyo, but the cabbage plants are not miniature. They are big and full and close together. The Japanese have learned how to raise them that way.

Japan is so determined to be correct and be better than anyone else that a heart-felt religion finds a harsh existence in an infertile soil. But after a week in the northern part of Japan, the first wave of Mississippians who were there on an evangelistic mission reported 117 professions of faith. The report of the second wave in the southern part has not been compiled as yet.

The Mississippians were there at the invitation of the Japan Baptist

Convention to help in the observance of 100 years of Baptist and work in Japan.

The southern group returned home last week with the same sort of glowing impressions that the northern group had reported two weeks earlier. While the atmosphere and attitudes were not conducive to the type of evangelism that is familiar to Mississippians, the people were so gracious that it was a joy to be among them.

Guy Henderson, evangelism director for Mississippi Baptists, was the leader for the second wave.

For the southern group there were 48 people on 17 teams. One of the teams, made up of Todd Bowen of Friendship Church, Aberdeen, and Odean Puckett of First Church, Natchez, was assigned to two churches; so the second group actually visited (Continued on page 5)

State gifts total \$1,451,218 during month of October

Mississippi Baptist gifts through the Cooperative Program in October totaled \$1,451,218, according to an announcement by Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

That amount, added to that given January through September totals \$15,707,990, which is \$390,701 more than that given in the first 10 months of 1988.

The 1989 budget calls for \$15,919,617 to be given January through October on a pro rata basis. This means that giving is \$211,627 behind that projected amount.

The original budget was \$20,103,541, an amount reduced by \$1 million by the convention board this fall. Had that amount stayed the same, giving would be \$1,044,961 behind the pro rata amount of \$16,752,951.



Mississippians visit at a Japanese barbecue. Oizumi Church, Tokyo, had a barbecue in the church yard on sports day. Mrs. Tony Ludlow, left foreground, a missionary from Mississippi, visits with, continuing from left, Judith Blackledge of Laurel, Don Dobson of Collins, June Noland of Mantee, and Paul Harrell of Jackson. (Don McGregor photo)

Ad hoc FMB trustee group protests O'Brien hiring

By Robert O'Brien

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The appointment of William R. O'Brien as a top special assistant to the president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board drew protest in a letter from 28 of the board's 89 trustees in October.

FMB President R. Keith Parks disagreed strongly with contents of the letter in a point-by-point written response to all 89 trustees Oct. 24.

News of the confidential letter broke after the Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch heard rumors about the letter, confirmed its existence from two trustees, and published a story Oct. 21.

"I feel I must respond to all trustees point by point because the letter signed by 28 of you is now public and because I am personally offended by what it implies about me and my character," Parks wrote to the trustees.

The letter to Parks, sent to him by trustee Bob Claytor of Rome, Ga., on behalf of the signers, listed five areas of disagreement with Parks' decision regarding O'Brien. Parks named O'Brien to the post after O'Brien requested to step down from the board's executive vice presidency when his wife, Dellanna O'Brien, accepted the executive directorship of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union. The O'Briens, former missionaries to Indonesia, now live in Birmingham.

The letter, received by Parks Oct. 16, said the signers disagreed with O'Brien's selection on grounds it (1) has the "appearance of cronyism" and makes an exception not available to other employees; (2) has "the appearance of linkage of two separate national organizations, the FMB and the WMU," which should operate independently; (3) is not cost effective in light of board emphasis on budgetary cuts; (4) makes it difficult for O'Brien to supervise employees from out of town; and (5) puts a person (O'Brien) with "open identification with the moderate faction in the Southern Baptist Convention" in a role the 28 trustees find objectionable.

"His role as liaison to other denominations and our agencies would not be our choice," the letter said.

Claytor, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Rome, said the 28 trustees had no intention of questioning Parks' integrity or character but wanted to correspond with him privately to express an opinion.

"We highly support Dr. Parks," Claytor said. "It (O'Brien's appointment) is his shot to call. We feel like it was not a wise thing to do."

Parks said he was "astounded" the 28 trustees felt the need to send the letter after receiving advance information on the selection and hearing a full discussion of it in several settings during a trustee meeting Oct. 9-11 in Richmond. Claytor said some trustees "didn't have an opportunity to respond in an appropriate setting" and chose to write Parks rather than deal with it publicly at the trustee meeting.

Claytor said questioning of O'Brien's role had nothing to do with any political effort against Parks or O'Brien, despite the letter's fifth point about O'Brien's identification with denominational moderates.

"It would be dead wrong (for anyone) to say we're trying to get Dr. Parks or Dr. O'Brien," Claytor said. "There's no linkage, no broad pattern" connected to political activities at any other SBC agency, he said. "It was our

looking at a decision he made and disagreeing with it" because of how it might be perceived by Southern Baptists.

"Bill O'Brien's open identification is with the cause of foreign missions," Parks responded in his letter to trustees. "On occasion, he and I and others are accused of political statements when we are speaking against something we believe negatively impacts missions but happens to have the endorsement of one political faction."

Noting his awareness of "accusations of political identity" made about O'Brien, Parks declared: "If this board ever reaches the point where 'perceived' Baptist political identity is viewed as a primary qualification for any staff position or for appointment as a missionary, we will greatly damage and probably destroy the weakened cords of cooperation that barely manage to hold us together. Thus far, this has not been a qualification and we have a mixture of both political viewpoints on staff and among missionaries. It must remain so if we remain the cohesive force of Southern Baptists."

Contacted for his reaction, O'Brien said he and Parks have taken and will continue to take steps to avoid the appearance of cronyism and conflict of interest and to make certain they practice good budgetary and administrative approaches.

On the political issue, O'Brien said, "I get shot at from the left and the right when I comment on priorities of the Kingdom of God. My commitment is to missions and, as the Psalmist says in Psalms 141, my eyes are fixed on the Sovereign Lord."

Parks responded to each of the other four points:

— Appearance of cronyism — "This makes it appear that my integrity is being questioned. I feel insulted by the allegation of cronyism and the statement that such an exception would not be made for anyone else. Bill O'Brien is not the only FMB staff member who has lived outside Richmond," he said, citing examples.

Parks also said management experts "are insisting on new approaches" and that "technology has allowed many others in other organizations to function effectively outside the home office." He cited O'Brien's "gifts which equip him uniquely for this role" and noted Birmingham "is more central to SBC agency constituency than Richmond." O'Brien oversees the board's denominational relations and serves as liaison with other evangelical groups.

— Appearance of FMB-WMU linkage — "As I have said before, there may be some potential for an initial misunderstanding here," Parks said. "We will work carefully to demonstrate there is no conflict of interest." He said O'Brien will not take part in specific working relationships between the two agencies and already has stepped down from roles that create an appearance of conflict of interest.

— Budgetary concerns — "My commitment to budgetary controls is well documented," Parks said. "That will be carefully monitored in this case." He noted that O'Brien's job requires a lot of travel, "which may be done as well or better from Birmingham" and added that O'Brien voluntarily accepted a salary reduction when he

resigned as executive vice president and stepped into a position vacated by the retirement of another staff member.

— Administrative supervision difficulties — This "is something we have acknowledged and will evaluate as to effectiveness," Parks said. "Many assignments in the organization could not be handled this way. This is not one of them." He noted that much of O'Brien's responsibility relates to "travel, telephone, and computer linkup," that he supervises "self-starters" and is involved in a careful planning process, regular meetings, and monitoring.

Parks disagreed with a final paragraph in the trustee letter which asked that trustees be involved in the evaluation of O'Brien's role.

"Staff evaluation is an administrative responsibility," he said. "Even staff cannot properly evaluate unless there is direct supervision and accountability. I evaluate only those reporting to me. It would be unfair to you and to me and to Bill to expect trustees to evaluate a staff member for whom they do not have administrative responsibility. The board does participate in the evaluation of the president. Beyond that each staff and each missionary is evaluated by administrative supervisors."

Robert O'Brien writes for the FMB.



"Witness" Quartet members, left to right, are Lowell Jackson, 23, bass; Amanda Warren, 19, alto and pianist; Philip Hudson, 19, lead; Christy Rayburn, 13, tenor; Scott Hudson, 17, bass guitarist.

"Witness" spends weekends singing

The Southern Gospel Quartet, "WITNESS," from Pontotoc travels weekends witnessing through songs, testimonies, and fellowshiping.

This is what they have been doing each weekend since forming the group in the early spring of this year. In addition to 60-plus singings, they have taken two group trips, the first to Gold City's homecoming at Glenco, Ala., and the second to the National Quartet Convention, Nashville.

Although most of their singings have been in churches, they have also sung in city and county fairs, at benefits, auctions, TV stations, airports, and gymnasiums. Their main objective, they say, is to "reach some

lost person somewhere for the Lord."

Amanda, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Warren, and Christy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Rayburn, both attend Valley Grove Baptist Church in Pontotoc County. Lowell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Jackson, attends Alter Baptist Church in Itawamba County; Philip and Scott, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Gene Hudson, both attend Toxish Baptist Church in Pontotoc County.

Any church, group, or organization wishing to contact or book the quartet may call 601/840-7833. They do not have a set fee; traveling expense is handled by love offerings they receive.

Belmont receives \$2 million

NASHVILLE (BP) — Belmont College in Nashville has received two \$1 million gifts for its Massey Business Center.

Barbara Massey Clark of Nashville made a personal commitment to the center's building campaign, and Joe Massey of Atlanta announced an identical contribution on behalf of the Massey Charitable Trust.

Carey elects . . .

(Continued from page 3)

"This action by the Board of Trustees at this time will provide William Carey with continuity in its administrative functions, and confer upon Dr. Edwards needed additional authority at the 1989 Mississippi Baptist Convention. However, these benefits were not the reason for Dr. Edwards' selection. The Search Committee and the Board of Trustees, after much prayer and deliberation, are convinced that Dr. Edwards is God's man for president at this time." Dale said the election of Edwards was without opposition.

Edwards said that when he was appointed as interim president "the major goal I set at that time was achieving institutional stability and unity within the various constituent groups at William Carey College. An enormous amount of my time and energy has been focused on the priority of financial stability."

Edwards said he planned an announcement in the next few days concerning achievement of that financial stability. Reports were that a multi-bank loan deal was about to be signed which would give Carey \$4.1 million toward paying off its deficit and reorganizing its finances.

Belmont's Jack C. Massey Graduate School of Business and Massey Business Center are named for the entrepreneur and Baptist layman who is Clark's father and Joe Massey's uncle.

In addition to his work with businesses such as Kentucky Fried Chicken, Hospital Corporation of America and the Mrs. Winner's restaurant chain, Jack Massey also helped develop Southern Baptist interests. He aided in laying the groundwork for the Southern Baptist Founda-

tion, was chairman and a 12-year member of the board of Baptist Hospital in Nashville, chaired the building committee of Belmont Heights Baptist Church in Nashville and supported Belmont College, a Tennessee Baptist school.

The latest contributions push total gifts and pledges for the Massey Business Center to slightly more than \$7 million, Belmont officials said.

The Massey School drive is part of a \$20 million campaign to raise funds for the entire college.

Gulfshore schedule — 1990

For details on program content of the various conferences, contact the program director's office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. To register for the conferences, contact Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, MS 39571.

May 21-23: I Senior Adult Conference
May 24-26: II Senior Adult Conference
May 26-28: Single Adult Conference
May 28-June 1: III Senior Adult Conference
June 1-5: I Youth Conference
June 5-9: II Youth Conference
June 9-13: III Youth Conference
June 14-18: IV Youth Conference
June 18-22: V Youth Conference
June 22-26: VI Youth Conference
June 26-30: VII Youth Conference
July 2-6: Family Enrichment Conference
July 7-11: Young Musicians Conference
July 12-14: Discipleship Training Leadership Conference
July 14-18: Youth Music Conference
July 19-21: Church Music Leadership

July 21-26: I Centrifuge
July 26-28: Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Conference
Church Weekday Educational Conference
Stewardship Conference
Church Missions Development Conference
July 28-August 2: II Centrifuge
August 2-4: I Sunday School Leadership Conference
August 4-9: III Centrifuge
August 9-11: II Sunday School Leadership Conference
August 11-16: IV Centrifuge
August 16-18: III Sunday School Leadership Conference
September 7-8: IV Sunday School Leadership Conference
September 14-15: V Sunday School Leadership Conference

Thursday, November 9, 1989

Mississippi Baptists aid future ministers

By Tim Nicholas

The Mississippi Baptist Board of Ministerial Education is providing financial aid this fall semester to 159 students planning to enter church-related vocations (CRVs), said Johnny Walker.

Walker, chairman of the board, made his report to the Mississippi Baptist Education Commission recently in Newton.

Church-related vocations are ministerial in nature, including those who plan to enter preaching, religious education, church music, youth work, or missions.

Of those 159, 44 are receiving \$110 per month; 65 are receiving \$90 per month; and 50 are receiving \$70 per month. The amount given is dependent on needs as established in applications and personal interviews.

In addition, the board has given six students a total of \$1,400 for hardship assistance.

A total of 53 Mississippi College students are receiving aid while there are 47 at Clarke College, 32 at William Carey College, and 27 at Blue Mountain College receiving financial aid.

The 159 total for regular assistance represents an increase of 38 over the fall of 1988. But while the number of students assisted goes up, the number of CRV students at Mississippi Baptist colleges continues to decrease.

The total CRVs reported for the fall of 1989 is 235. For fall of 1988, the total

was 253. For 1987 it was 295. And for 1986, the total in CRVs was 366.

Also, the number of students receiving aid who are planning on entering the preaching ministry continues to drop. For 1989 it is 100. It was 105 in 1988, 130 in 1987, and 205 in 1986.

The board also reported it plans to offer aid to students attending summer school in 1990 with funds available only to those enrolled in school the previous semester, and depending on the supply of funds.

Projected budget for the board for 1990 would be \$139,635.50 including some monies to be spent from reserve funds. The budget is subject to passage during the Mississippi Baptist Convention this month.

The board noted that 129 males and 29 females are included in the financial aid report.

Those who apply for financial aid must be full-time undergraduate Southern Baptist students at Blue Mountain College, Clarke College, Mississippi College, or William Carey College. They must provide verification of their public commitment to ministry along with reference letters and must participate in a personal interview with board members.

To apply, a student should contact the board's representatives on campus. These are William Washburn at BMC, John McCall at MC, J.B. Costilow at Clarke, and Bennie Crockett at Carey.

South group reports on land of miniatures

(Continued from page 3)

18 churches. That made the final total 48 churches touched by Mississippi visitors.

In three cases Irene Martin of Harpersville was the only person to visit churches. She spent five days in Maebashi visiting the church, a college, and secondary schools there and then visited the church in Omiya and Tokiwadai Church in Tokyo in addition to the Oizumi and Myogadani churches in Tokyo, where there were team members.

Others in the north group who were single-member teams were Ollie Blevins of New Mexico of Ichikawa Church, Chiba; Ricky Tanner of Midway Church, Lucedale, at Mejirogaoka Church, Tokyo; Pat Bufkin of Pilgrims Rest Church, Crystal Springs, at Aiko Church, Kanagawa; and James A. Ruffin of Poplar Springs Church, Meridian, at Minami Senri Church, Osaka.

A single team member with the south group was Richard Bradley of Handsboro Church at Katae Mission. The Bowen-Puckett team in the south visited the Kure Church and the Yahatahama Church.

Other southern group teams were as follows:

Ogori Mission, Fukuoka, Joseph M. S. Anderson, Wayne Boulter, and Jeff McCreary, all of First Church, Boyle.

Sasebo Church, Rickey Blythe, New Hope Church, Tupelo; Sara Gallaspy and Ray E. Bell, Alta Woods Church, Jackson.

Shimonoseki Church, James R. Chatam II, Darwin Brooks, Wilson Reynolds, and Frances Reynolds, all of Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.

Nokata Church, Stan Nowell, Bill Hames, and Larry Vaughn, all of Im-

manuel Church, Greenwood.

Matsue Church, Michael O'Brien and Virgil King III of First Church, Lexington.

Futsukaichi Mission, Bruce Hill Sr. and Bill Barrett of First Church, Lexington.

Ube Mission, Lannie Wilbourn, Pinelake Church, Brandon; Eileene E. Justice, Baltimore, Md.; Carolyn C. Martin, First Church, Indianola; and Loretta Goslin, Eastwood Church, Indianola.

Mojiko Church, Rex Yancey, First Church, Quitman; Jennings Orr, First Church, Jackson; and Mrs. Teen Deweese, First Church, Coldwater.

Kobe Nishi Church, Earl Kelly and Marjorie Kelly, First Church, Jackson.

Kitakata Church, James W. Street, Lynda L. Street, Gil Powell, and Linda Stubblefield all of Calvary Church, Jackson.

Kobe Higashi Mission, Gayle Alexander, Paul Koonce, and Mike Ellis all of First Church, Tupelo.

Sakai Church, Terrell Suggs and Jerry Dunajick of First Church, Union.

Hiroshima Church, Frank Thomas Jr., Bob Jones, Greg Kinsley, and Delores Ballard, all of Alta Woods Church, Jackson.

Ijuin Church, Jerry Weber, South McComb Church, Harry Boenker and Mrs. Boenker of House Springs, Mo. Fukuoka Shinsei Church, Kiely Young, Roy Raddin, and Jeff Tarver, all of First Church, Greenville.

Earl Kelly recently retired as executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The partnership arrangement with Japan Baptists to observe their 100th anniversary was initiated during his tenure.

Churches adopt expanded annuity plan

The following churches have adopted the expanded Annuity Plan since those reported in the October 5 issue of the Baptist Record: Bolivar: FBC Rosedale; Chickasaw: Pleasant Ridge; Franklin: Damascus; Hinds-Madison: Daniel Memorial and Hillcrest; Holmes-Leflore: Morgan City; Itawamba: New Home; Lincoln: Harmony; Mississippi: Berwick and Mt. Olive; Neshoba: Beat Line; Pearl River: New Henleyfield; Rankin: FBC Pearl and Pinelake; Scott: FBC Morton; Smith: Lorena and Shady Grove; Sunflower: Moorhead; Tallahatchie: Cascilla and Cowart; Tishomingo: New Liberty; Winston: Shiloh; and Yalobusha: O'Tuckalofa.



Corinth Church, Tillatoba, recently dedicated its pastorium. Roy Hartzell is pastor.

"Midwestern future tied to convention health"

By Brenda J. Sanders

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — "The future of Midwestern Seminary is inexorably tied to the health and vitality of the Southern Baptist Convention," Midwestern Seminary President Milton Ferguson told the school's trustees.

"We are a convention institution," he said. "The future of this institution is as viable as the future of the Southern Baptists' life and fellowship."

In his president's report during the Oct. 16-17 meeting of seminary trustees, Ferguson urged them to join him in pledging commitment to reconciliation within the convention.

In the face of conflict and animosity, "God's answer is always reconciliation," Ferguson said. "Therefore, I challenge you to join me in redoubling our commitment here at Midwestern Seminary to be a part of reconciliation and a part of finding an answer to the problems" of the convention.

Ferguson affirmed his commitment to be "part of the solution" and said, "I shall not be partisan, politically."

He added, "I call on this trustee board to search your own convictions . . . and to ask God to give you the grace to be relieved from partisan

commitments."

The lingering denominational controversy is partly to blame for the decline in enrollment at Midwestern and other Southern Baptist seminaries, Ferguson said.

"Many of our students just now graduating from college cannot remember when the Southern Baptist Convention was in conflict," he explained.

"Increasingly, some of them are having difficulty responding to the challenge (of seminary education) because they don't know for sure what the future holds.

Southern Baptists can restore fellowship and harmony to the denomination when they focus on commonalities rather than differences, Ferguson continued.

"The way to do that is to make sure that Christ is at the center of each of our lives, and to be less concerned about who's right and who's wrong," he said. "As we focus more on the reality of the risen Christ in our fellowship, we will find that we will be drawn closer to each other."

Brenda Sanders writes for Midwestern Seminary.

Convention-related meetings

Southern Baptists for Life: breakfast

"Abortion is still an issue which concerns many of us," said Paul Jones, executive director, Christian Action Commission. "Recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions have given many persons hope that the issue will soon be returned to the control and authority of the states."

Several years ago a group of concerned Baptists formed a Mississippi chapter of Southern Baptists for Life. Now, out of a need to plan future strategy regarding abortion legislation, the Mississippi chapter is planning a meeting during the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

The meeting will be Tuesday, Nov. 14, in the Sky Room of the Baptist Building, 515 Mississippi Street, at 7 a.m. and will include a continental style breakfast.

"Please make plans to attend and bring other concerned Baptists with you so that we can develop a true statewide body of Baptists committed to ending the current commercialization of abortion and human suffering," said Jones.

Alliance reception

The Southern Baptist Alliance of Mississippi will host a reception following the afternoon session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention on Tuesday, Nov. 14.

The reception will be held in the old Primos location on State Street across from First Baptist Church. A brief videotape will be shown demonstrating the concerns of the Alliance and there will be ample opportunity for fellowship. "Everyone is welcome," says Raymon Leake, First, Picayune.

Fired prof files suit

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — A former professor at Southwestern Seminary, fired in 1985, has filed suit against the seminary and its president, Russell Dilday.

T. Farrah Patterson, the only tenured professor to be fired in the history of the seminary here, filed suit in District Court in Fort Worth Oct. 19, alleging he had been deprived of his livelihood and suffered severe mental anguish.

Patterson also sued a Fort Worth law firm, Gandy, Michener, Swindle, Whitaker, and Pratt, alleging they failed to give him prudent legal advice.

Also named is attorney J. Shelby Sharpe, a member of the law firm when the firing occurred. The suit alleges Sharpe cared more about Christianity than his client.

The suit seeks unspecified compensatory and exemplary damages.

Patterson was fired on a 27-2 vote of seminary trustees Oct. 22, 1985.

In the March 1985 meeting of trustees, Dilday brought a six-point charge against Patterson, then associate professor of preaching and communication.

Patterson had been on the seminary faculty since 1969. Dilday's charges alleged political implications by Patterson and alleged the professor was a "profane man," a poor teacher, insubordinate, and a poor churchman and that he had made an "intentional distortion of the truth."

The political controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention was featured in the discussion of Dilday's charges.

Trustees voted in the March 1985 meeting 19-12 to fire Patterson, two short of the required two-thirds majority needed.

After the meeting, three members of the seminary administration devised a "re-engagement" process designed to return Patterson to the classroom. He had been suspended prior to the board meeting.

The matter came before the trustees again in their October 1985 meeting.

Trustee Chairman J. Drew Gunnells, a pastor from Mobile, Ala., reported Patterson, then 52, would not follow the plan and would not meet with the administration about it.

Trustees voted to fire Patterson for his failure to respond to the "re-engagement" process, and they did not act on Dilday's original charges.

In the lawsuit, filed by Fort Worth attorney Steven M. Carsey, Patterson says Dilday conducted "a campaign of harassment . . . which consisted of false written and oral accusations about plaintiff's lifestyle, morals, attitude, professional and religious competence, and religious loyalty . . ."

It says he was wrongfully terminated, and "since that time . . . has been unable to find reasonably comparable employment and remains unemployed."

Patterson made a copy of the petition available to Baptist Press, writing across the top of the first page, "No comment at this time."

Efforts to telephone him were unsuccessful, as were efforts to reach his attorney.

The seminary, the suit said, "wrongfully breached and terminated plaintiff's contractual tenured employment agreement . . ."

Dilday and seminary officials declined to comment on the suit until they have talked with legal counsel. Seminary officials said legal papers had not yet been served.

Thursday, November 9, 1989

Mississippi Baptists in Japan

Photos by Don McGregor



Mary Elizabeth Ray, a missionary from Mississippi, bids farewell to the Mississippians during the victory breakfast on their final day in Japan. Sarah Perkins, who visited the Rays' church, sits at right.



In a land of fine pianos, Irene Martin of the BAPTIST RECORD staff plays the finest one she found, a nine-foot Yamaha grand at a Sunday afternoon concert at the Tokiwadai Church in Tokyo.



Izumi Ozaki sings during a youth concert at Oizumi Church. The group is known as "The Air." Contemporary Christian music is popular with the Christian young people in Japan.



Nobuyoshi Togami, pastor of Tokinadai Church, Tokyo, closes out the morning service at his church following the message by Irene Martin of Harpersville. Togami and his wife were the first Japanese Baptists to go overseas as missionaries. They served in Brazil. They attended New Orleans Seminary.



Many Japanese who make public professions are never baptized because that would represent such a definite break with their family traditions. During a piano concert by Irene Martin of Harpersville at the Myogadani Church, however, a professing Christian made the decision to be baptized. Then she invited the Mississippi team to her tiny apartment next to the church for a tea party. The lady, second from left in the white blouse, runs a health spa in her apartment. From the foreground are Irene Martin, Yvonne Boleware, and Steve Griffin.



Paul Harrell, right, leader of the south group of Mississippians, visits with Mrs. Satoh, left, at Chofu Church, Tokyo. Mrs. Satoh is a graduate of Howard Payne University in Texas. Pastor Ken Otai and Mrs. Otai are in the group.



Charles Nestor, pastor of First Church, Bruce, was selected to speak first during the south group victory breakfast to express the appreciation of Mississippians for the opportunity of ministering in Japan. Following Nestor's remarks, each team reported. Next to Nestor are Yvonne Boleware, Steve Griffin, and Pat Bufkin.



Paul Miller, left, pastor of Mantee Church, plays guitar for a sing along at Hino Mission in Tokyo on the first Sunday afternoon. Max Love, mission administrator, leads the singing. At the right end are Marty Comer of Mantee Church and Mrs. Love.

Do you love me?

By Russell Bush, Jr.

This question asked of Peter by our resurrected Lord is a pertinent question for each of us. Jesus asked this question three times and there were answers given. While our King James translation uses the word "love" in both the questions and the answers, we can only understand when we know that there was a play on words. There were two Greek words used. One word expressed supreme love, the other expressed friendship. Jesus asked for supreme love but Peter never went beyond the expression of friendship. It is not my intention to answer why. I want to emphasize that Jesus calls for supreme love.



Bush

Jesus states it in another way: "If a man puts his hand to the plow, and looks back, he is not fit for the kingdom of God." He says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." He also says, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

We often use the term total commitment to describe such love.

Ian Thomas says, "Total commitment is committing all that you know about yourself today, to all that you know about God today."

Total commitment is Job crying out, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him."

Total commitment is Bonhoeffer praying, "Lord, whatever this day may bring, Thy name be praised!"

Total commitment is Martin Luther saying, "Here I stand. I can do no other!"

Total commitment is Jesus facing the cross and praying, "Not my will, Father, but Thine be done."

Let's love him supremely!

Bush is pastor, Main Street, Hattiesburg.

Letters to the editor

State Lottery

Editor:

When I was a child I believed there was "a pot of GOLD at the end of the rainbow." Apparently, some adults STILL believe there is if they believe in a state lottery.

A state lottery seems like "a pot of gold," and many people will buy lottery tickets, but only a FEW can win.

Can we "kid" ourselves that we will be the BIG winner? Week-after-week we will purchase lottery tickets and DREAM of winning; the odds are over 1,000,000 to one that we will win!

Let's WAKE UP and smell the coffee. (P.S. there is NO gold at the end of the rainbow.)

Robert S. Leigh
Jackson

Lottery a sin

Editor:

I want to express my opposition to using funds generated from a lottery to fund Education Reform Act II.

I agree with the Education Reform Act proposals with the exception of the lottery for partial funding.

The lottery is morally wrong, and all Christians should take a vocal stand against it.

I encourage readers to contact their legislators immediately and ask them to vote against the lottery.

Some supporters of the lottery will tell you that the people have a right to vote on the issue. However, even if the majority of the people in our state endorse a lottery in a statewide referendum, it is still a sin. It will always be a sin. Even the majority can't change that.

It's also wrong for God's people to sit back and avoid taking a stand.

As Christians, we need to stand against this issue while we have the chance.

I am hoping a more appropriate funding mechanism can be found to fund Education Reform Act II.

Terry Paul Graham
Fulton

Ignored the gospel

Editor:

The Baptist Record dated 12 October 1989 carried a letter titled "All are Priest." This letter was written by the Pastor of the Dixie Baptist Church of Hattiesburg. The brother stretched credulity and abused the truth when he accused the Convention leadership of Nazi tactics and sprinkled his epistle with buzz words like power control, stifled free speech and oppressive dictatorship. He speaks of free speech and tells us that employees are free to speak their feelings and concerns. His concern is for Russell Dilday and Lloyd Elder and others who have chosen to subvert their positions of truth and to strike out at the God that they profess to serve.

The brother quoted Revelations 6:10 and I suppose he thinks that would support his allegations and his plea for uncontrolled freedom to advance false doctrine. I recommend that he look at verse 9 of Revelations chapter 6 and see who it is there in heaven crying "HOW LONG, O LORD", and he will find that it is those who were slain for the Word of God. That's right, those who were slain for the Word of God; not those who ignored or perverted the Word of God.

Dilday and Elder have ignored the Gospel and I'm afraid that this brother is close to doing the same thing. We are people of the Bible because it is the only manifestation of God that we have. You and the other two brothers are free to think and speak any heresy that you can conceive; however, you must never forget that Christ and Christians will hold you accountable for your actions. Freedom always carries with it responsibility. That goes for Christian freedom and the freedom we experience as Americans.

Bob Sheppard
Terry



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Press conference in Moscow

October 10-20 I was in Russia with 40 journalists, members of National Federation of Press Women, from all over the U.S. Our purpose was to gather information for stories, as well as to do some sightseeing. Two besides me went from Mississippi — Lola Autry of Hickory Flat and Sarah Peugh of Aberdeen. Martha Reed of Beaumont, Texas, directed the tour.

We were given opportunities to interview Russian journalists, teachers, doctors, in Moscow, Tbilisi, Sochi, and Leningrad. Also we set up our own interviews with other individuals along the way, as we had a chance. I listened in on an interview of two artists who have their own business, and I interviewed several members of the Leningrad Baptist Church.

Tuesday morning, in Moscow, the sun was shining, which Tanya, the Intourist guide, said meant that "the angels are traveling," but the wind was sharp and biting. We stopped by Red Square before driving on to the offices of Tass, the central news service of the Soviet Union, on Tverskoy Boulevard. I was a bit haggard, for I'd had about three hours sleep.

We had spent most of Monday in Helsinki, Finland, for a "rest break." But eight women in a room designed for two (and my half of a curved corner couch) didn't encourage sleep. When we got to Moscow in the middle of Monday night, my bag wasn't there. I spent an hour signing a sheaf of papers and searching in the "Left Luggage" room, and most of another hour riding in a taxi to the Kosmos Hotel. I went to bed at 3 a.m.

In the sixth floor conference room of the Tass building, we sat around a long polished conference table. Six men, writers and editors for Tass, answered questions. Yuri Ustimenko, head of the American desk at Tass, presided. Behind him, a large window revealed hills and tall buildings. Here are some of the questions and answers from the press conference, plus information from a Tass booklet.

(Tass has 220 correspondents working in 127 countries. Their main subscribers are 4,000 Soviet newspapers and all Soviet television

and radio committees.)

What kind of stories do you want from the United States?

With the changes (of perestroika) we are just now getting to know what Americans are doing in agriculture, business, and finance. We want to learn something useful from you. Almost a third of our crops are lost because of lack of preservation knowledge. We used to write of strikes, racial strife, and other bad things about America. Now we find everything about America interesting. Our papers are not now as critical of you as yours are of us.

"We are asking our reporters based in the U.S. for feature articles on different aspects of life in the United States. Tass is trying to give a true picture of the United States as it is, not as we always pictured it."

How many women editors in Tass?

22

Why are none of them here today?

He answered that with a laugh and said, "They are working."

Why do you send no women abroad as correspondents?

"We think it is more difficult for a woman journalist to work abroad than for a man. If she has a husband, and he has no job in the other country, it's hard for him to go along."

What about the proposed freedom of expression bill I've read about, that is being discussed by the government?

I hope it goes through. It sounds good, but whether it will work, I don't know. I haven't read the bill, so I'm not sure exactly what it would provide. I believe that freedom of press will be established.

With Tass being an official agency of the Soviet government — does that help or hinder your work?

I consider myself a journalist and not an agent of the government. We want truthful journalism. We are a team of fellow thinkers who share the same ideology . . . but every word we print is not reviewed by the government."

What are the requirements for a journalist who wants to be employed by you?

A university diploma, experience in writing, and a good knowledge of the language of the country in which he wishes to specialize. Also he should be a Party-oriented journalist. The majority of our journalists are Communists.

How much has perestroika affected your agency?

"A case in point is our coverage of visits and statements of Soviet party and state leaders. Now we have no texts prepared in advance, and when we do have, many changes may be made in them . . . The overwhelming majority of Soviet journalists, including those at Tass, are active advocates of glasnost and democratization of mass media."

"We are trying to make our politics work better, our economics work better, but I don't see an idea generally accepted and in practice. Things are worse than a year ago."

Is it true about the food shortages?

"Yes, there are shortages. Another is in soap. Some shelves are empty of specific products."

After Lola Autry talked with Ivan Lebedev, editor of the American desk at Tass, I asked him about the Bible shortage. He said it was true, and added that he was not a religious person, but for the morals and good of the people, he thought it should be read. He accepted a copy of the New Testament which I handed him.

By the time Lola, Sandra Cummings, a reporter from New Jersey, and I had waited for an elevator, tour buses had gone and left us stranded at Tass, with no rubles. We walked back into the building; the guard ordered us to leave. Sandra lingered, trying to explain our predicament to a woman at a desk. Just then, the deputy director of Tass came by, a young-looking man with white hair, and stopped to see if he could help. Neither he nor the man he assigned to us had been in our meeting.

Igor Agabekov, staff writer for Tass, placed himself and his white Volga at our disposal for the next hour and a half, and then delivered us to the American Embassy. He was a con-

(Continued on page 8)



At Moscow headquarters of Tass, Soviet news agency, Yuri Ustimenko, head of the American desk for Tass, president. To his right, standing, is Marj Carpenter, Louisville, Ky., national news director for the Presbyterian Church, USA, and first vice president, National Federation of Press Women. To his left is

Natasha Krasilnikova, Intourist guide for the four American journalists' tour of Russia. Carpenter presented to Ustimenko an NFPW pin, and named him an honorary member of the organization. (Anne Williams photo)

Thursday, November 9, 1989

Faces and places

(Continued from page 7)
genial man of medium height, with brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a brown leather jacket.

He said that 30,000 cars of goods, food included, were not being unloaded, due to an illegal strike. He thought the strikers were old-timers who wanted to subvert perestroika, and he said he thought Gorbachev too soft — that he should use martial law to stop the strike.

Lines of people waited everywhere, for food and other items, lines extending from stores into the streets. I saw a double line of cars at least half a mile long, waiting at a station, to buy gas.

Igor said he reports to the world what is happening in Russia and had previously worked in Ghana, Nigeria, and Southwest Asia.

He too said he had no religion, but that one of his best friends is a leader in the Baptist church in Moscow. If I had time, he said, he would arrange an interview with the friend. But we could find no time. He did make it possible for us that night to talk with art collectors at their business.

This meeting with Igor was certainly unscheduled. He too accepted a New Testament. Could not the word, sharper than a two-edged sword, also pierce the heart of a Communist journalist?



Mr. and Mrs. Wiley Reid

Friendship celebrates double anniversary

Friendship Church, Lincoln County, celebrated its 180th anniversary, Sept. 3, and Wiley Reid's 20th anniversary as pastor. Talmadge Smith brought the pastor appreciation address.

Mrs. Reid was presented a dozen red roses and pastor Reid a plaque; they were given a love offering in appreciation for what they mean to the church and community.

After "dinner on the ground," the church history was read. Music was presented by Perline Case, Jerry Smith, Berry and Trudy Givens, The Messengers, and The County Line Quartet.

Just for the Record



Associational GA/RA day camp for Washington County was held on Sept. 29 and 30 at Second Church, Greenville. This was the first year for the GAs to spend the night. On Friday night, a pizza party was held before the Gas wore on Mission Adventures.

After a home cooked breakfast Saturday, the GAs took part in art and crafts, music and games (above).

D. P. Smith, at left, missionary to the Ivory Coast, was special guest. Average attendance was 150. Mary Lynn Williams is associational GA director, James Kerr, associational RA director; Mrs. Carolyn Gilder, associational WMU director, and Roy D. Raddin is director of missions.



Temple Church, 815 McCluer Road, Jackson, recently had a ground breaking ceremony at the construction site of its new 2,800 sq. foot pastorium which will be located on the church property. Pictured, front row, left to right, are Glenn Kelly, pastor, and members of the building committee, Ricky Sandridge, O. B. Pendergrass, chairman, T. H. White, and B. J. Belk, a deacon. Mrs. JoAnn Belk (not pictured) is also a member of the committee.



Chicora Church of Buckatunna, held its GA recognition on Sept. 30, with the theme, "Reach Out." Receiving badges and pins, left to right, front, are April Robichaux, Tonya Robichaux, Amanda Mills; back left, Bre-Ann Beasley, Christy Walley, April Crane, Meachelle Beasley and Emily Sumrall. Sherry Sturdivant is the leader.

The Mississippi College Department of Music will present Larry Boyd, organist, in junior recital, Nov. 16, at 8 p.m. in Provine Chapel. Boyd is completing requirements for the bachelor of music degree in performance and the bachelor of music in church music. The public is invited.

Carmel Church, Monticello, will host the New Zion Church children's choir singing "Kid's World," Nov. 12 at 6 p.m. The choir is under the direction of Patsy Carr and Rose Walker. Sammy J. McDonald is pastor of Carmel Church.

John L. McGraw of Laurel is new president of the William Carey Alumni Association. McGraw, a 1972 graduate, is an orthopedic surgeon and member of First Church, Laurel.

Lowrey Memorial Church, Blue Mountain, will celebrate its 110th anniversary on Nov. 19, at 10:30 a.m. Bill Peacock of Richmond, Va. and Rick Spencer of Amory will be the guest speakers. A covered dish meal will be held in fellowship hall. Night services will be held at 7 p.m. Matt Buckles is pastor. Activities include recognition of past and present members.

Washington County associational WMU officers have received diplomas in associational general leadership. Roy D. Raddin, director of missions, Washington Association, presented the diplomas at a meeting on Oct. 10. Each officer has a diploma in associational WMU leadership, and WMU leadership for officers. Each officer also has a diploma for the age level with which she works. Those who received the diplomas are Cindy Potter, Mission Friends director; Mary Lynn Williams, Girls in Action director; Vicki Heep, Acteens director; Grace Hicks, Baptist Women and Baptist Young Women director; and Carolyn Gilder, associational WMU director.

Revival dates

Highland, Laurel (Jones): Nov. 12-15; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Junior Hill, Hartselle, Ala., 1989-90 vice-president of Southern Baptist Convention, evangelist; Price Harris, Calvary, Shreveport, La., music; D. W. Sewell, pastor.

Halbert Heights (Lincoln): Nov. 12-15; Evangelist R. F. Gates, Shreveport, La.; Sunday, 10:45 and 6:30; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Thomas Winn, pastor.

Mississippi Baptist activities

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Nov. 13 | Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Meeting; Baptist Building; 10 a.m. |
| Nov. 13 | Ministers' Wives Conference; FBC, Jackson; 2-4:30 p.m. (CAPM) |
| Nov. 13-15 | Mississippi Baptist State Convention; FBC, Jackson |
| Nov. 15 | Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Meeting; Baptist Building; Immediately following the convention |
| Nov. 16-17 | Church and Community Ministries Conference; Lake Tiak O'Khata, Louisville; Noon, 16th-Noon, 17th (CoMi) |
| Nov. 17-18 | DiscipleYouth Workshop; Temple BC, Hattiesburg; Noon, 17th-Noon, 18th (CT) |
| Nov. 17-1 | Disaster Relief Training; Central Hills; 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. (BRO) |



First Church, Collinsville, recently held a special service on state missions. Pictured is T. S. Pigford with his presentation on new churches and missions. The program, "Lift up Christ in Mississippi," included the participation of Brotherhood, Baptist Young Women, RAs, GAs, Acteens, and Brotherhood and WMU mission support chairpersons. David L. Sellers is pastor.

The Woman's Missionary Union of First Church, Moss Point, began its new year with a fall fashion banquet on Oct. 3, in the church's fellowship hall. Rebecca Williams, Mississippi Baptist Convention Area 9 WMU coordinator, was guest speaker. New officers installed were June Fairley, WMU director; Susan Hardin, enlistment-enlargement director; Peggy Davis, secretary-treasurer; Joy Pater, mission study director; Marty Perkins, mission support director; Patti Gattis and Jan DeLashmet, mission action co-directors; Wanda Smith, Acteens director; Alexa Roney, Girls in Action director; Jane Faggard, Mission Friends director. Baptist Women group leaders are Dot DeLashmet, Helen Swann, Carolyn Holland, Shirley Landrith, and Marty Perkins.

Off the Record

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Names in the news

Dwight Earl Cummings, son of W. G. and Mrs. Mary Cummings, was ordained to the gospel ministry on Sept. 24 at First Church, Ocean Springs. Paul Aultman, pastor, delivered the charge to the church and Don Welch delivered the charge to the candidate. Cummings' father gave the ordination sermon. Cummings was recently appointed by the Home Mission Board to serve in Manitoba, Canada. He is now pastor of Selkirk Baptist Church and the Winnipeg Beach Mission in that area. He graduated from New Orleans Seminary in December, 1988, and served as church planter apprentice in Manitoba, Canada, during the summer of 1989.

Cummings

was recently appointed by the Home Mission Board to serve in Manitoba, Canada. He is now pastor of Selkirk Baptist Church and the Winnipeg Beach Mission in that area. He graduated from New Orleans Seminary in December, 1988, and served as church planter apprentice in Manitoba, Canada, during the summer of 1989.



Kansas City, Mo. — William Milam (right) of Indianola, Miss., is congratulated by Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Theological Seminary, upon his receipt of a \$750 "Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Richardson Ministerial Scholarship" for the 1989-90 academic year.



Pinkston

Jim Pinkston, minister of music and youth for the past two and one-half years at Oakland Church, Corinth, was ordained into the gospel ministry on Sept. 3.



Tandy Whitten was recently ordained as a deacon by Corinth Church in Tillatoba. Roy Hartzell, pastor, was the speaker.

Senior adult corner

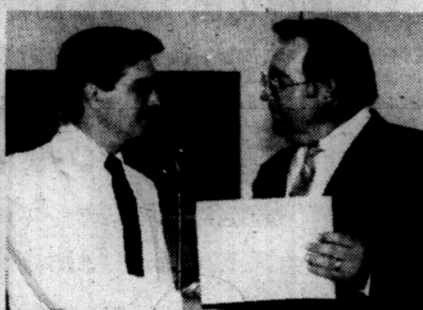
The Senior Singers of State Boulevard Church in Meridian, have returned from their tour to St. Louis, Mo. They were gone from Oct. 5-10.

The singers were featured at Black Madonna Shrine and Grotto in the morning and were given a tour of the grottos followed by lunch. As they left the chapel the directors rang the large bells in their honor. The singers did a second concert at Six Flags Over Mid-America in the afternoon.

Sightseeing included Gateway Arch, Grant's Farm, and The Missouri Botanical Garden. The choir is composed of approximately 50 members of the church and is directed for Mrs. Bobbye Lynne Dunnam.



Bill Barrett (center) was ordained to the gospel ministry by First Church, Lexington, Oct. 8. Gus Merritt, (left) pastor of Clarke Venable Church, Decatur, preached the ordination sermon and Michael O'Brien (right) pastor, also took part in the ordination service. Barrett is the son of Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Barrett of Lexington.



Emmanuel Church, Pearl, recently licensed Jeff Harrison, left, to the gospel ministry. Tommy Anderson, pastor, is pictured at right. Harrison is available for pulpit supply and may be contacted at 419 Sarah Dr., Pearl, MS 393-8979.

Emmanuel Church has recently purchased property on Highway 80 east of Pearl on which to build new worship and education facilities.



Albert M. Parsons (left) was licensed to preach recently at Stanton Church, Natchez. Steve Purvis, pastor, presented the certificate. Parsons is currently serving as minister of music, chairman of the deacons, church training director, and teaches a Sunday School class of young adults.

First Church, Magnolia, recently licensed Randy Lenbir to preach the gospel. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Lenoir of Magnolia, he is president of the BSU at Tulane, and the interim minister of youth at First Church, Magnolia.

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Teaching Lives - Growing Churches

Dan Thompson retires

Dan Thompson, pastor of Harperville Church in Scott County, has retired. His last Sunday with the church was Oct. 29. The Thompsons have moved to Nacogdoches, Texas, where children live.

Thompson is a native of Jeff Davis County, and his mother still lives in the area along with other relatives.

For his last service at Harperville Church, a program of memories detailed by several key members of the church was presented. Martha Burnham was in charge.

During 40 years in the pastorate in Mississippi, Thompson was pastor of six churches. First there were two half-time churches, Sandy Hook and Antioch, both in Marion County. He served these churches for four years. For eight years he was at Improve Church, also in Marion County, before moving to Providence Church in

Lebanon Association for four years.

Thompson was pastor at Ackerman Church for 18 years before moving to Harperville Church for the last six years.

During his Mississippi ministry, Thompson was elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention to membership on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and on the Baptist Record Advisory Committee. He was vice-chairman of the Baptist Record Advisory Committee 1982-85. With the Convention Board he was a member of the assemblies committee and the building and pastoral aid committee and was chairman of the business advisory committee. He was also elected to be a member of the Convention Board's Executive Committee from 1981 to 1983. He was a member of the Convention Board on two occasions — from 1966 to 1972 and from 1979 to 1984.

Thompson is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary.

The Thompsons' address in Nacogdoches is 210 Burrows Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75961.



Thompson

Southern Hills Church, Jackson, has called Tim Pierce



Pierce

of Jackson, as minister of music, effective Oct. 22. A native of Booneville, he is a graduate of University of Southern Mississippi. His previous place of service was Pelahatchie Church.



Howell

Unity Church, Montgomery County, has called Tim Ellison as pastor. Ellison has moved there from the pastorate of New Salem, Carroll County.

Mt. Zion Church, Hernando, has called Steven D. Howell of Southaven as pastor, effective Oct. 10. He is currently attending Mid-America Seminary in Memphis.

Pedley Southern Baptist Church, Pedley, Calif., has called Ronald U. Fitts as pastor, effective Oct. 14. Fitts is a graduate of Mississippi State University and New Orleans Seminary. Before moving to Southern California, he served as minister of education in churches in Louisiana. Fitts is the son of Ruth Fitts and the late Ulvie Fitts, who served as pastor for several churches in Tupelo for over 30 years.

Providence Church, Meadville, has called Lowell D. Ingram as pastor, effective Oct. 15. A native of Duck Hill,

he received his education at Mississippi State University and is currently attending New Orleans Seminary. He previously served as minister of music and youth at First Southern Church in Pearllington.

Timothy D. Hisaw, Gulfport, has accepted the position of minister of youth at First Church, Mansfield, La., effective Oct. 23. A native of Lafayette, La., his previous place of service was Bayou View Church, Gulfport. He received his education at New Orleans Seminary.

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Mayhall to retire

Nat Mayhall, director of missions for Alcorn Association has announced his retirement, effective Dec. 31. Dennis H. Smith, pastor, First Church, Corinth, says "Anyone interested in submitting resumes to be considered in filling this vacancy should mail them to: Kara Blackard, chairman, Director of Missions Search Committee, Rt. 4, Box 220, Corinth, MS 38834. All resumes should be submitted by Thursday, Nov. 16. No name will be considered without the submission of a resume to the DOM Search Committee."

Homecomings

Westside, Bruce (Calhoun): Nov. 12; 11 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; afternoon singing, 1:30; W. Buford Usry, pastor, speaker.

Sand Hill, Richton (Greene): Nov. 12; 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m.; dinner on grounds, noon; T. R. Coulter, Laurel, guest speaker; Gary A. White, pastor.

Griffith Memorial, Jackson: Nov. 12; 82nd anniversary; 11 a.m., worship; covered dish in fellowship hall, noon; Bruce Cappleman, pastor.

Galilee First Church, Gloster: Nov. 12; homecoming; 165th anniversary; services at 11 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; covered dish lunch at noon; Millard Purl of McComb, guest speaker; Victor Walsh, Summit, guest singer; Thomas Wicker, pastor.

Horseshoe, Tchula (Holmes): Nov. 12; Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 10:45 a.m.; Larry E. Kilgore, former pastor, guest speaker; dinner in fellowship hall; afternoon singing; no night services; Donald Riley, pastor.

Revival dates

Westside, Bruce (Calhoun): Nov. 9-12; 7 p.m. each evening; 11 a.m., Sunday morning; W. Buford Usry, pastor, evangelist; E. P. Stegall, Westside, music.

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John writes of provision for the redeemed

By Billy R. Williams

Revelation 7:1-4, 9-10, 13-17

With the opening of the sixth seal John was brought to the beginning of the end (6:12-17). There remained only the seventh and final seal to be broken. Then the scroll (see chapter 5) could be opened, and the story of the end time events could begin. Four angels were poised at the four corners of the earth ready to release the destructive power of the four winds (vs. 1). Suddenly there is an interlude at which time the people of God, on the threshold of a great tribulation, are assured that God will bring them safely through the terrible ordeal (vs. 1-8). Furthermore, the church will be delivered safely into the heavenly kingdom (vs. 9-17).



Williams

The four angels are instructed by another angel not to release the divine retribution until the servants of God have been made secure by the seal of God on their foreheads (vs. 2-3). This seal is a mark of God's ownership and is an assurance that the faithful will be brought safely through the tribulation. This sealing is not to be understood as a visible bodily sign but rather a spiritual fact. It is comparable to the

UNIFORM

spiritual sealing by the Holy Spirit of all Christians. The angel's instructions were followed by the account of the sealing of the 144,000 out of every tribe of Israel (vs. 4-8). Some take this number literally. However, it seems best to see this as a symbolic number denoting completeness and perfection. The number 144,000 is the multiple of the square of twelve (the number of Israel) and the square of ten (the number of perfection). It thus indicates the sealing of all of God's servants who face the Great Tribulation.

There are differing views as to the identity of the 144,000. Some interpreters take this to be literal, physical Israel. They see the 144,000 as a select group of Jews who will be converted to Jesus shortly after the rapture of the church. These converted Jews will evangelize the world in seven years, resulting in the salvation of a great number of Gentiles.

A second view is that this number refers not to physical Israel but to spiritual Israel—the Church. The proponents of this view believe that such passages as Romans 2:28, 29; 9:6, 7; Galatians 3:29; 6:16; Philippians 3:3 teach that the church is the true and spiritual Israel. Therefore, they see this event as the sealing of

the body of believers — both Jew and Gentile — who face the tribulation.

Whether the number is converted Jews or the church, these people are marked as God's own possession and given the assurance of God's loving care. While violence and even death may fall upon them, their souls are protected by God. The believers of today may rest assured that no matter what life may bring, God's people are always secure in his grace.

The scene shifts from earth to heaven where a vast multitude of people from every nation stand before the throne of God and the Lamb (vs. 9). Some believe that this vast multitude are the Gentiles converted during a seven-year period following the rapture of the church. However, since verse nine speaks of the vast multitude being composed of people from every nation, then this must include Jewish believers as well as Gentile believers.

Several things are to be noted concerning this innumerable band. First, the people were standing in the presence of God, denoting his acceptance. Second, they were clothed in white robes, denoting purity and righteousness. Third, they held the branches of palm trees, a symbol of victory and celebration. Finally, they loudly proclaimed as in one voice that their deliverance was the work of God through the Lamb, Jesus Christ (vs. 10). In reaction, the

angels prostrated themselves before the throne in worship (vs. 11), giving vocal assent, "Amen" (so let it be), to the shout of the multitude and ascribing to God seven qualities (vs. 12).

In response to an elder's question as to the identity of those in white robes, John turned the question back to him by stating, "Sir, thou knowest..." (vs. 13, 14). When one has revelation from God, there is no need for the speculation of man. The elder informed John that the multitude are those who are coming (present tense) out of the great tribulation. They had endured a terrible time of opposition and persecution and had remained faithful to the Lord. The elder then spoke of a striking paradox — they had washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb (vs. 14). In other words, they had believed in Jesus and his atoning death for the forgiveness of sin. It is for this reason that the vast multitude stand properly clothed before God's throne, serving him day and night, enjoying God's presence (vs. 15).

As they dwell with God, the redeemed will have no unsatisfied desire. They will be free from all suffering (vs. 16). The Lamb will now become their Shepherd, providing for their every need. All anguish and sorrow are now past (... wipe away all tears), for they will dwell in perfect peace with Christ (vs. 17).

Williams is pastor, First, Gautier.

Paul gives guidance for responsible relationships

By R. Raymond Lloyd

II Thessalonians 3:1-16

The appeal for prayer (3:1-2). In characteristic fashion Paul, begins the wrap-up of his letter with the request for continual prayer from his friends (vs. 1).



Lloyd

This appeal is for a two-fold purpose: promulgation of the gospel (vs. 1b — "free course" — to keep on running swiftly; "be glorified" — to keep on winning) and protection for himself (vs. 2a — the particular opposition in Corinth is unclear). Note the order! Paul is obviously more concerned about the continuous spread of the

Word of God in other places, just as it had been successful in Thessalonica, more than his own safety. Keep on praying for your pastor, staff, and missionaries. They want it and they need it for the same reasons as Paul.

The last phrase of vs. 2 realistically describes Paul's world and ours — "for all men have not faith." Phillips adds the word, "alas," which probably interprets Paul's sorrowful spirit correctly. That all persons do not believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour should be distressing and motivating to every Christian.

Responding to the faithfulness of God (3:3-5). From a momentary concern for himself, he

BIBLE BOOK

turns to the dependable nature of God. No matter what perverse men may do, God will be faithful and adequate. He will "stablish" (strengthen) and "keep" (guard as a sentry) "from evil." It is not clear whether this is neuter (evil), or masculine (evil one). If it is the latter, it may refer to Satan, or a representative of Satan, perhaps the man of sin in 2:1-12. Regardless, the Thessalonians need not fear what could happen, they could have unlimited confidence in God.

His confidence in the Lord is again expressed in vs. 4 by their response to God in doing the right things as Paul commands them. It is both a compliment, "do," and an appeal, "will do." The word "command" is a military order. They apparently had responded well to the apostolic authority of his first letter (cf. I Thess. 4:2), and he anticipates they will do the same to the commands of this letter (cf. vs. 6, 10, 12). Notice the focus, however, is not on Paul, but on the Lord. He further amplifies his confidence in the faithfulness of God as he speaks of his love and patience (5b-KJV) "patience waiting for Christ" — however, most scholars take it to be subjective, as the patience shown by Christ).

Responding to the foolishness of men (3:6-15). In strong language Paul deals with the

disorderly and the disobedient.

As some of the members had misinterpreted his teachings on the return of Christ, they quit their jobs and proceeded to wait with excitement and in idleness for Christ to come (vs. 6 — "walketh disorderly" — a military term meaning out of step). Even though Paul commands the church to withdraw from such, he still calls him "brother."

Paul had provided both instructions and example regarding work. Paul could have expected support (Cf. Luke 10:7; I Tim. 5:17-18), but he chose to labor at a trade in order to provide an example for the Thessalonians to imitate. Genuine spiritual leaders will lay aside rights for the sake of others. This, however, should not be used as an excuse not to support God's servants. This was Paul's choice in order to be an example for young believers.

The biblical view of work is clearly defined in vs. 10 — probably an old Jewish saying. Man was created to be a worker (Cf. Gen. 1:28; 2:15). Work is not the result of sin, but sin turned it into an almost hopeless toil (Gen. 3:17-19). God gave man a responsibility to work, in order that he might have self-fulfillment and self-esteem. One should recognize that Paul is not questioning the ability of a person to work, but his willingness. This has nothing to do with the unfortunate person who cannot work for one reason or another. The subject here is the person who is unwilling, or who refuses to work.

They are identified by three picturesque participles in vs. 11: "walk... disorderly" (out of step, causing confusion and division in the church); "working not at all, but are busybodies" (play on words — "doing no business, but are busybodies." They were busy, but just fooling around accomplishing nothing.

His admonition to them is to work, to do so with "quietness" in contrast to the excited frenzy of "busybodies," and not to be cowardly, in doing good. Again, in spite of their faults, Paul still calls them "brethren."

Briefly, he instructs the church on how to deal with those troublemakers who are disobedient (vs. 14-15). The discipline is plain and firm (Cf. I Cor. 5:9-13). But they are to be treated not as enemies, but as a "brother." The purpose of the discipline was not to hurt, wound or drive away, but to turn them around and restore to full fellowship. "Too often church people simply denounce and destroy those who do not seem to do right. Every possible effort should be made to reclaim and strengthen the wrong-doer." (Hobbs).

The assurance of prayer (vs. 16). Now Paul prays that the Lord of peace will restore peace where disorderliness and disobedience have prevailed. Such peace in the church can only come when Jesus is Lord in the hearts of his followers. Here is the place to begin to strengthen the life of your church.

Lloyd is pastor, First, Starkville.

Begin where you are to tell of God's healing power

By Randall L. Von Kanel

2 Kings 5:1-3, 8-10, 14-16

In recent years, the phrase, "Bloom where you are planted," has become a popular expression. Speaking of making the best of who, what,



Von Kanel

and where you are, the idea challenges us to capitalize on opportunities at hand. The world missions task demands our immediate attention. We can begin where we are in our calling to missions.

Our lesson for this week continues the emphasis of missions as a biblical mandate for the church. With this lesson, we launch a seven-week unit of study entitled, "Missions in Action." Though we understand God's call to the world missions task, we must move beyond comprehension to definite actions. We must identify attitudes and actions necessary for missions to become a lifestyle endeavor. The central truth of this first lesson is that "we are to find ways to witness in our own circumstances."

In our focal passage, we are introduced to the nameless slave girl of the Syrian commander,

LIFE AND WORK

Naaman. Though left in the obscurity of her namelessness, the young girl occupies a special place in biblical history. In 2 Kings 5:1-3, the story begins with the girl coming to the aid of her master.

Naaman, though an acclaimed soldier and a man of much honor, was a leper. In spite of the accolades and accomplishments of his life, he suffered the socially and physically debilitating effects of leprosy. The usage of the phrase, "but he was a leper" (v. 1), highlighted the vanity of his life. Naaman needed help! Though he had everything in terms of possessions and prestige, he did not have life full and free.

Leprosy in that day robbed a person of real life — physically, socially, and spiritually. (M. F. Unger notes that a leper was regarded as one who was dead and separated from the covenant people. See also, BBC, Matheny and Honeycutt, Vol. 3, p. 240.)

The slave girl saw her master's need and responded with a word of hope. In verses 2-3, she sends a message to Naaman through his wife. The message was a promise of healing if he would seek out the prophet of God. We should note the character and courage of the girl. Just

a slave girl with every right to be embittered toward her Syrian master for having removed her from home and family (v. 2), she sought help for Naaman. As a slave girl, mere property, rather than person in the customs of that time, she took the initiative even from her lowly position to do something significant — help someone seek the Lord!

Missions is pointing people to the Lord who alone can help them with the dreadful, life-robbing condition of sin. As with Naaman, the world knows not where to turn in search of hope. We must respond right where we are to those in need. Without waiting for the right social position or opportune economic situation, we must tell people about the "Great Physician" today!

After receiving nothing but remorse from the king of Israel, Naaman is called on by the prophet Elisha to experience the reality that "there is a prophet in Israel" (v. 8). Naaman, at first seeking help on the level of kings, is pointed to the person of the prophet, the one who represented God and his Word. The message of healing for Naaman was a call to obedience (v. 10). With what was a rather absurd and disappointing request to Naaman, Elisha downplayed any hint of grandiose ceremony and instructed the notable general to "go and

wash in Jordan seven times." Someone has said that perhaps "Naaman thought he was a great man who happened to be a leper when in fact he was a leper who happened to be a great man." God's call through the prophet was a call to trust in God, not man. People are sinners in need of the Saviour, no matter their station in life. Doing missions is proclaiming the uncompromising Word of God that leads to salvation.

Naaman had a choice — to believe God through the words of the prophet, or to leave, still in his dying condition. He chose to believe the promise of God. In verses 14-16, he obeyed and washed. Naaman was healed according to the promise. His healing led to his confession that "there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." Some say that seeing is believing, but in the Christian life, believing is seeing the power of God. For as Naaman believed (obedience), he saw what great things the Lord had promised (healing). Missions is sharing the Word of God that people might believe in Jesus!

The healing of Naaman all began when an out-of-place, foreign slave girl dared to declare her faith to someone who was searching for answers. Using her as an example, let us begin now where we are to tell people about "the healing power of the Lord."

Von Kanel is pastor, First, Hattiesburg.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Pen Pal Club

Dear Baptist Record,

My name is Caty Bird. I am 10 years old. I need a pen pal desperately. If you are interested please write back. My address is Rt. 7, Box 142 BF, Columbia, MS 39429.

Your friend,
Caty Bird

Dear Pen Pal,

Hi! My name is Heather Smyly. I'm 11 years old and I have blonde hair and hazel eyes. I live in Columbia, MS. My address is 1511 Hickory Bend, Columbia, MS 39429.

I have lived in Columbia for five years. I'm in the 6th grade. I go to Jefferson Middle School. Well, gotta go!

Your friend,
Heather Smyly

Dear Baptist Record,

My name is Tavia Lee and I want a pen pal. I have brown hair and blue eyes. I am 10 years old. My address is Rt. 1, Box 166, Enterprise, MS 39330.

Sincerely,
Tavia

Dear Pen Pal,

How are you? How old are you? I am eleven years old, and live in Columbia, Mississippi. I hope you want to be my pen pal. Will you write to me often? I have brown hair, brown eyes, and go to church at First Baptist Church, Columbia, Mississippi.

Susan Swann
610 Dale St.
Columbia, MS 39429

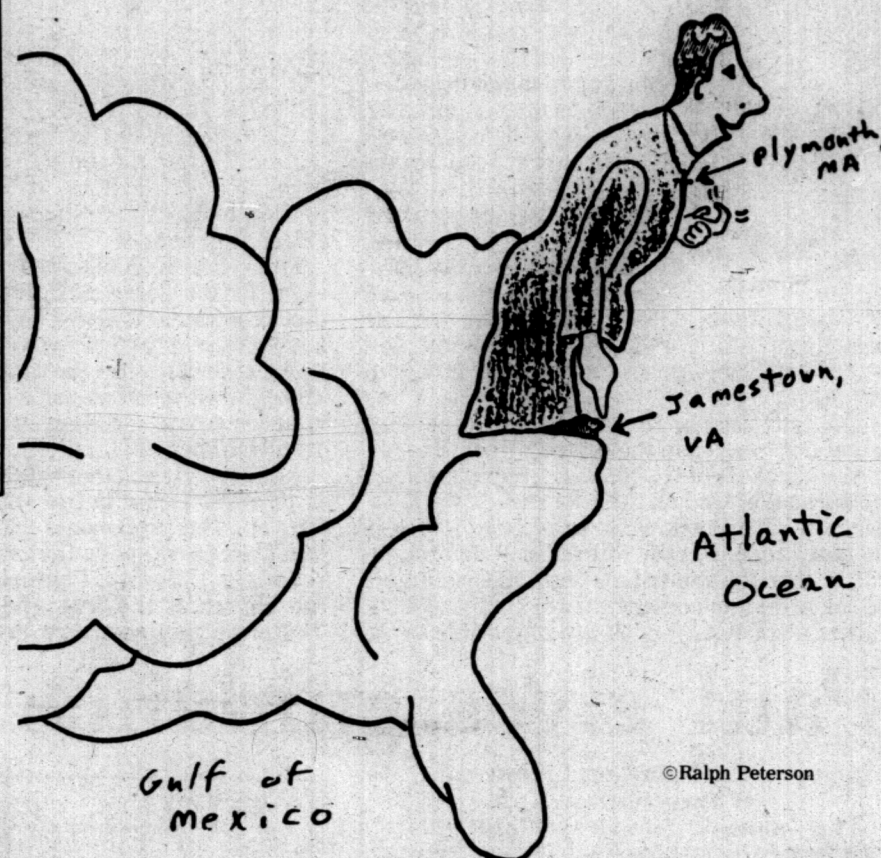
Dear Baptist Record,

My name is Cindy Shirley. I'm 14. I have brown hair and brown eyes. I would love to have a pen pal. I live in Macedonia, Miss. My address is Rt. 1, Box 391, Myrtle, MS 38650.

Your friend,
Cindy Shirley

GEOGRAFUN: (For Young Readers) Nations and Imaginations

By Ralph C. Peterson



©Ralph Peterson

November is time for Thanksgiving Day, when we think of the Pilgrims. Do you think that the northeastern states look like a Pilgrim man pointing to the first English settlements in America? Color the man and the map.



Mission Friends (ages 3, 4, and 5) of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, collected clothes and art supplies for Crestwood Mission, Jackson, to commemorate World Hunger Day. Hillcrest Church's Baptist Young Women's group sponsored



the World Hunger Day collection of food. Members, including the children's departments in Sunday School, brought over eight boxes of canned goods on Oct. 8 for distribution at Crestwood Mission, Jackson.

Steep Hollow music director retires after 58 years



Biser Smith

Biser Smith, age 79, retired Oct. 1, 1989, after 58 years as music director at Steep Hollow Baptist Church, Poplarville. He was honored after church services on Oct. 1 with a "din-

ner on the ground" attended by many who paid tribute by presenting him with a plaque commemorating his years of dedicated service.

At the age of 9, he was asked to lead the congregational singing at an old-time revival meeting, as he had already attained the reputation in the community of having a clear and distinct voice. "His first love has always been singing," states his daughter, Doris Perez of Biloxi.

Biser has also been a deacon and Sunday School teacher/director and has held other positions in his church. As pulpit chairman he has contacted the Baptist seminary in New Orleans asking about student pastors. Many times, as a result, student pastors were elected to serve at Steep Hollow. Biser commented, "If they make it at Steep Hollow, they are prepared for anything."

Biser and his wife, Wilma, will continue to live in the Steep Hollow community.

Four children die in Seoul fire

SEOUL, South Korea (BP) — Four children died and about a dozen more were in critical condition following a fire Oct. 16 that destroyed a kindergarten facility at a Baptist church here.

When the fire broke out during

lunchtime, 33 children were at the Seoul Memorial Baptist Church kindergarten, said missionary Virgil Cooper, administrator of the Southern Baptist mission organization in South Korea.



Robinson Road dedicates sanctuary

Robinson Road Church (Gulf Coast) dedicated its new building on Sept. 24. The facilities include a sanctuary and complete education facilities. Most of the construction was done by volunteers. Woolmarket is the sponsoring church. Pictured, left to right, are M. L. Faler of Woolmarket, Bobby Perry, director of missions for Gulf Coast Association, and Ray Wuerzer, pastor.

The Christian world represents only 33 percent of the world's population. More than two-thirds of the men and women in the world do not believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.



New mission opens on coast

Robinson Church, newest mission on the Gulf Coast, opened on Oct. 1, with 29 in Sunday School and 51 in worship. The church, pictured, is on U.S. Highway 49 and Wortham Road between Lyman and Saucier. Faithview is the sponsoring church. Bobby Wedgeworth is pastor and Bobby Perry is director of missions, Gulf Coast Association.

Missionary dies of hepatitis

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (BP) — Barry Nottingham, a first-term Southern Baptist missionary to Burkina Faso, died Oct. 23 of hepatitis and subsequent complications.

Nottingham, 35, had contracted the disease a week earlier. His condition deteriorated rapidly Oct. 21 and he was flown from Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to a hospital here. He died there before medical evacuation to the United States was possible.

Nottingham, of Waco, Texas, was the father of three children. He was pastor of First Baptist Church in Bynum, Texas, from 1982 until he and his wife, the former Dana Lamb of Pasadena, Texas, were appointed as Southern Baptist missionaries in 1987.

Mrs. Nottingham and their three children were scheduled to fly from Abidjan to Houston Oct. 23. Nottingham's body also will be flown to the United States after arrangements are completed.

Baptist Record

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